











QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT UNDER THE MULTI-YEAR APPEAL

1 APRIL THROUGH 30 JUNE 2020

Data under the Results Framework at mid-point

	1,197 political and conflict analyses that considered regional dimensions
	57 per cent of departmental analyses incorporated inputs from other UN departments
	23 Common Country Analyses informed by departmental analyses
	100 per cent of UN mediation support teams included women members
	5 UN (co-) led peace processes in which gender expertise was requested and provided
	100 per cent of electoral needs assessment reports included gender-specific analysis and recommendations
	2 lessons learned studies and 2 self-evaluations initiated
	15 policy materials and guidance developed, updated and digitized
	207 staff completed DPPA-led or supported trainings
	9,346 subscribers to Politically Speaking online magazine

In the second quarter of 2020, well into the COVID-19 pandemic, the Multi-Year Appeal (MYA) was instrumental in translating the vision and priorities set out in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs' (DPPA) Strategic Plan for 2020-2022 into action. The new MYA is the most ambitious appeal for funding the Department has ever issued, seeking to mobilize \$45 million for this year to meet increased demand and sustain our activities. By 30 June, the Department had received \$20 million in contributions and pledges, leaving a funding gap of \$25 million (appeal 45 per cent funded).

The pandemic has obviously, and substantially, affected the way DPPA works and delivers its services and expertise. Demand for our services has changed in nature, especially in the areas of mediation support and electoral assistance, but is expected to remain high for the remainder of 2020. Thanks in large part to the MYA, the Department was quick to adapt its tools to the new reality imposed by the spread of the coronavirus. Many of these capacities - including mediation support and electoral assistance - are entirely funded by the MYA, which proved once again to be an ideal programmatic tool in times of crisis.

As a vehicle designed to enhance the capacities of the UN and our partners, the MYA was also able to continue funding staff capacity and programmatic activities at Headquarters and in the field. Other parts of the portfolio, meanwhile, have been affected by the pandemic, including travel, deployments of experts, organization of conferences and the hiring of consultants. The implementation rate for the MYA at the midyear point reached 45 per cent, which must be considered satisfactory under the circumstances.

The Department has already conducted two Quarterly Reviews of projects, leading to a budget reduction of \$4 million. These re-programming exercises allowed DPPA to adjust its priorities and re-assess the risk management and mitigation strategies of all MYA projects. A further budget reduction of \$1 million is expected before the end of 2020 as a direct result of adjustments related to the pandemic, bringing total cuts to \$5 million for the whole year. Considering all these factors, the new funding target for 2020 has been lowered to **\$40 million**, which should allow the MYA to cover needs and operations with efficiency and flexibility, allocating resources for maximum impact. As the MYA has no funding reserve, DPPA relies on contributions flowing in throughout the year to sustain its activities. In this challenging environment, competition for resources remains fierce. We hope that we can continue to count on your support as we contribute to the search for political solutions and responses to potential or existing conflict and the impact of crisis, including COVID-19.

G

GOAL 1: CONTRIBUTE TO PREVENTING AND RESOLVING VIOLENT CONFLICT AND BUILDING RESILIENCE

Action-oriented multi-dimensional analysis

COVID-19 is a new “stressor” with the potential to trigger or exacerbate conflict or violence in many parts around the world. DPPA is paying close attention to the implications of the pandemic in mission settings, situations of high security risk, and countries with fragile political transitions. DPPA is preparing weekly updates on the political and peace and security impact of the pandemic, which inform the Secretary-General’s Executive Committee meetings. Together with the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Department of Operational Support (DOS), DPPA is also preparing fortnightly updates on the impact of COVID-19 on the work of our field missions and their support to host countries in addressing the impact of the pandemic. DPPA is also contributing to the Secretary-General’s policy briefs on thematic issues or specific regions and is preparing occasional analytical notes focused on specific countries, regions or areas of engagement (e.g. impact of the pandemic on the Middle East, on the Americas, on elections, etc).

In addition, DPPA worked closely with UN Women on a joint policy brief bit.ly/2PhsvJx analyzing the impact of the pandemic on women and their meaningful participation in ceasefires and peace processes and contributed to the analysis of misinformation and hate speech in the context of COVID-19.

DPPA’s response to the Secretary-General’s call for a global ceasefire

The Secretary-General’s 23 March appeal for a global ceasefire has been endorsed by 180 Member States and one non-member observer State, as well as regional organizations, religious leaders, a broad coalition of international and local NGOs and more than 800 civil society platforms. The ceasefire call initially resonated with conflict parties in many contexts, including in Cameroon, Colombia, the Middle East, the Philippines, South Sudan and Ukraine; though statements of support did not always translate into concrete changes on the ground. On 23 June, DPPA issued a [Policy Note](#) exploring the challenges and opportunities presented by this call, including some of the potential calculations of conflict parties. The appeal for a global ceasefire was reinforced by the adoption of Security Council resolution 2532 on 1 July 2020, which is an important milestone as it sets clear priorities: a cessation of hostilities, humanitarian pauses and solidarity to face the Covid-19 pandemic. It sends an important signal to conflict parties and may help change calculations on the ground,

hopefully resulting in a reduction in violence and the expansion of opportunities for dialogue.

During the reporting period, the Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General have continued to engage with conflict parties, including through virtual platforms, to pursue entry points, enhance cooperation with relevant Member States and encourage reluctant conflict actors to move towards ceasefires. In Libya, acting Special Representative Stephanie Williams has remained in frequent contact with the warring parties to urge for de-escalation, as the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) continues to remotely facilitate recently resumed ceasefire talks as part of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission format.

In Yemen, Special Envoy Martin Griffiths continues to engage with the Government and the Houthis on a Joint Declaration encompassing a nationwide ceasefire, economic and humanitarian measures in response to the pandemic, and a resumption of the political process. In Afghanistan, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Deborah Lyons, is working both with the negotiating teams of the Government and the Taliban to identify what they may need in terms of negotiation support, and with a number of countries to build a network of support for intra-Afghan talks.



NANGARHAR: Radio producer for Sharq Radio in Jalalabad, Hadia, during a UN-backed radio feature programme, discussing the significance of a ceasefire during COVID-19 to facilitate medical assistance among others. Photo: UNAMA / Shafiqullah Waak

As it amplifies the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, DPPA has continued to make MYA funding available to field missions for local initiatives to curb the spread of COVID-19. DPPA is also assisting the ongoing digital adaptation of conflict prevention and peacemaking activities, including aspects related to security arrangements. The Department is providing training to mediation teams supporting Special Envoys and peacekeeping operations in digital process design and facilitation, all funded by extrabudgetary resources.

Mediation Support - ceasefire tracking tool

Following the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire on 23 March, DPPA assisted six NGOs/academic institutions in an initiative to develop a ceasefire tracking tool. The mechanism aims to monitor key developments during the COVID-19 period and will contribute to the Department's efforts towards the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2532 (2020). The tracking tool went live on 8 July and can be accessed at: <https://pax.peaceagreements.org/static/covid19ceasefires/>

Supporting inclusive peace and political processes

Following a request from the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in April to support its Regional Response Strategy to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the Special Envoy-Horn of Africa (OSE-HoA) mobilized 18 experts from across the UN family. The UN experts were requested to provide inputs to IGAD in the areas of emergency health response, health systems strengthening and coordination, socio-economic responses, and peace and security. A series of virtual meetings between IGAD, the experts and the OSE-HoA took place in April and May to discuss both the content of the strategy and working modalities. The IGAD Regional Response Strategy is aimed at coordinating the regional efforts in response to the pandemic and incorporating the protection of populations and special groups that face difficulties accessing the national health systems, such as internally displaced people (IDPs), refugees and migrants. The UN-provided expertise will enhance IGAD's capacity to provide an effective and holistic response to COVID-19. Moreover, the timely provision of expertise has also proven beneficial in further strengthening the institutional partnership between the UN and IGAD in keeping with the UN-IGAD joint framework for cooperation.

In Mozambique, thanks to MYA funding, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mirko Manzoni, continued to actively undertake good offices and dialogue with the parties and other relevant stakeholders to help resume the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process under the COVID-19 guidelines and also encourage the peaceful resolution of the RENAMO dissidence issue. The President of Mozambique, Filipe Nyusi, and the leader of RENAMO, Ossufo Momade, launched the DDR process on 4-5 June 2020. The process has resulted in the disarmament and demobilization of 303 combatants and the closing of the first RENAMO military base in Savanne, Dondo.

In Myanmar, ahead of elections set for 8 November, Special Envoy Christine Schraner Burgener remained active through virtual engagements, despite COVID-19 restrictions, amplifying the Secretary-General's global ceasefire call as conflict intensified in Rakhine State. The fighting further complicated efforts towards finding durable solutions and ensuring the safe, voluntary, dignified and sustainable return of forcibly displaced Rohingya refugees to their place of origin or choice. With MYA support, the Special Envoy's Office in Myanmar engaged with local authorities, religious and community leaders in addressing hate speech, promoting inclusive dialogue and social cohesion. Among the programmatic activities conducted were discussions with these key actors, including affected populations, about persisting grievances and political solutions. These efforts complemented the Special Envoy's advocacy for an inclusive COVID-19 response to help promote a unifying electoral process.



New York: Christine Schraner Burgener, Special Envoy for Myanmar, briefs the Security Council on the situation in Myanmar. UN Photo/Loey Felipe

In Syria, the conflict continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The MYA funded the following activities:

Conflict Analysis/Ceasefire Options: Technical support and advocacy by the Syria Team have supported UN efforts to secure a nationwide ceasefire, including through the

good offices of the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, and Special Envoy Geir O. Pedersen. Such advocacy has played a critical role in stressing the importance of maintaining the current relative decrease in violence.

Accountability: In April, the Secretary-General transmitted to the Security Council a summary of the report of the UN Headquarters Board of Inquiry into certain incidents in northwest Syria since 17 September 2018, to which the Syria Team had provided substantive and administrative support. During the reporting period, DPPA also continued to substantively support the work of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) to assist in the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes under International Law committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 by reviewing and facilitating access to materials relevant to the IIIM's mandate.

Brussels IV Conference: The Syria Team's engagement has ensured that the Conference reflects UN policy on Syria, including with regards to human rights, accountability and the political process led by Special Envoy Pedersen.



Syria: Special Envoy Geir O. Pedersen briefing the Security Council on the situation in Syria. UN Photo/Eivind Oskarson

Provision of mediation support

In the second quarter, and due to COVID-19 and related travel restrictions, the Mediation Support Unit (MSU) provided remote operational support on mediation and dialogue initiatives to Special Envoys, peacekeeping operations, special political missions, resident coordinators, regional organizations and other partners, mobilizing its staff as well as the mechanism of the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers. Remote operational support was provided in various settings, including Afghanistan, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Ecuador, Geneva International Discussions, Guatemala, Guinea, Libya, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan, Syria and Yemen. UN counterparts and partners were offered technical advice and targeted support on a broad spectrum of mediation and dialogue-related issues, including ceasefire arrangements, process design, transitional justice, gender and inclusion as well as constitutional reform, through remote online engagements, comparative analysis and options papers. Such support has assisted the design of processes to find entry points for engagement and overcome obstacles, helped identify possible options to address substantive issues, and built the capacity of mediation teams and national counterparts. Both MSU and the Standby Team are heavily reliant on MYA funding for their functioning and activities.



Mozambique: Family in their tent in the Taratara Camp, in Cabo Delgado province after Cyclones Idai and Kenneth. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

Standby Team Support in Afghanistan

On 29 February 2020, the US and Taliban signed the “Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan,” which covers guarantees that Afghan territory will not be used by terrorists, a phased US troop withdrawal, and the launch of intra-Afghan negotiations, including on a comprehensive ceasefire. DPPA has utilized the Standby Team to provide support to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as it works with the Afghan parties to prepare for peace negotiations. Standby Team experts on inclusion and process design shared comparative experiences on preparing for negotiations with the Afghan negotiating delegations, including components on constructing inclusive delegations (particularly with respect to women).

Furthermore, an expert on process design and transitional justice provided remote support to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) and UNAMA on human rights issues that could arise in Intra-Afghan Negotiations. This resulted in the AIHRC publishing a set of proposals on mechanisms to include victims of the conflict in the peace process. So far, these public proposals have generated constructive public discussion within Afghanistan. If some of these proposals are ultimately adopted by the negotiating delegations, this assistance has the potential to expand the inclusivity of future peace talks by giving victims of the conflict a voice in its resolution. It is anticipated that substantial assistance to the AIHRC will continue. Similarly, broader offers of mediation support and technical assistance have been made to the Afghan negotiating delegations and potential third-party facilitators of peace talks.

Digital tools in support of the Libya peace process

MYA funding was used for the development of the toolkit on digital technologies and mediation at the request of the Secretary General. Launched in 2019, this has provided a useful foundation as the Department increased its reliance on digital tools to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on peace processes. Rather than simply transferring the engagement strategies and approaches developed for in-person meetings to digital formats, approaches to mediation support and process design have needed to be adapted. Extrabudgetary resources facilitated the provision of training on digital process design and facilitation, tailored to the needs of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), which directly impacted the ability of the Mission to support conflict actors during virtual talks.

In the context of the Libya peace process, UNSMIL is facilitating three separate tracks of intra-Libyan discussions: security, political and economic. MSU assisted UNSMIL in its process of adaptation to the restrictions on direct diplomacy imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and need to use digital tools to convene the virtual meetings of the intra-Libya talks and the Berlin International Follow-up Committee on Libya and its working groups. With the assistance of an external expert, MSU provided support in the area of digital process design and facilitation. Over the course of a three-week period in June, participants in the training exercise discussed preliminary options and the required skills in the context of the three main tracks of the Libyan process and agreed to continue working together to develop specific proposals and digital designs. As a result, the UNSMIL security team introduced and adopted various technological tools and techniques in the facilitation of the security track, under the umbrella of the 5+5 Joint Military Commission. In parallel, UNSMIL's political team continues to explore concrete options to promote dialogue among and engage the participants in the political track, including the Libyan Political Forum, using instant messaging systems and other digital platforms.



Libya: A child runs through the debris and wreckage in downtown Benghazi, Libya. Photo: UNICEF/Giovanni Diffidenti

Electoral assistance support

Despite the current challenges related to COVID-19, the Department has continued to coordinate UN electoral assistance to Member States, using flexible arrangements as necessary and where possible. Many countries have postponed upcoming elections (both at the national and local levels) and referenda, including seven where the UN provides electoral support (national elections in Armenia, Bolivia, Chad and Ethiopia; local elections in Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay and Solomon Islands). Many countries are also considering how to proceed with holding elections using different mitigating measures.

UN entities providing electoral support are coordinating to assist authorities, where requested, in contingency planning, procurement, public messaging and facilitating consultations among stakeholders. DPPA is utilizing desk reviews in place of needs assessment missions to minimize staff travel and exposure. The Department, in partnership with UNDP, has developed an electoral operations guide aimed at assisting Governments and electoral authorities as they decide whether, when and how to conduct elections in the context of the pandemic. The guide is currently being used by UN electoral advisers across the globe to present options to Member States in this regard.

For example, in Bolivia, elections that were expected to take place in May 2020 have now been delayed to the second half of the year. With MYA funding, DPPA is supporting virtual multi-party dialogues to prevent conflict and create an environment conducive to carrying out an inclusive, participatory and credible electoral process, including in the run-up to election day. The multi-party dialogues bring together electoral authorities and members of political parties and civil society to assist in clarifying queries. Over 50 dialogues had been held by July 2020, focusing on youth, elections, and the pandemic. The events have created awareness among the electorate, brought various actors/parties closer together, and contributed to the de-escalation of conflict and a possible peaceful resolution through the elections.



Bolivia: Demonstrators protest in the streets of La Paz, Bolivia. Photo: UN /Patricia Cusicanqui

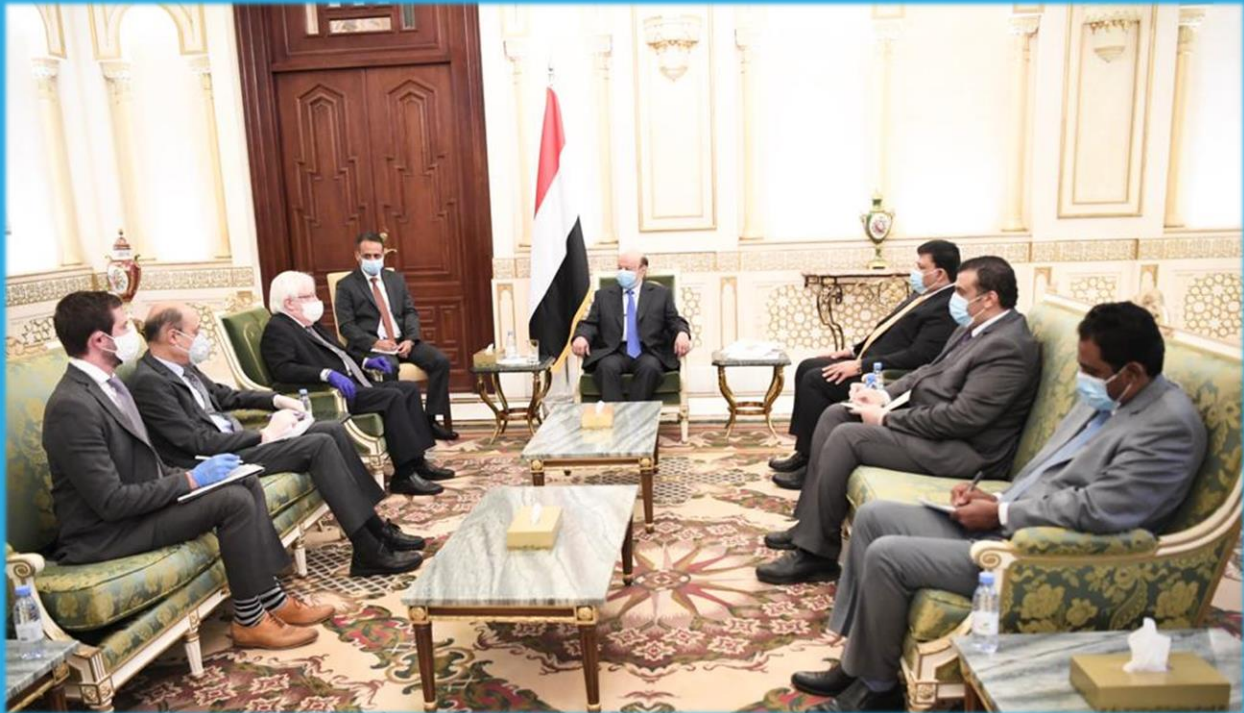
Adapting Innovation and new technologies to COVID-19

The establishment of the DPPA Innovation Cell in January 2020 has ushered in increased adoption of novel methods for conflict prevention, mediation and peacebuilding, and the uptake of enabling, cutting-edge technologies. The creation of an internal Innovation Group, which convenes divisional focal points and DPO counterparts, has accelerated this effort. It has also helped foster a culture of peer-to-peer learning across the entire peace and security pillar.

In partnership with the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library, the Cell has developed a Quick Guide on innovation methodology and theory (<https://research.un.org/en/innovation>). This resource is available to field missions, the broader UN system, and the general public to help promote and inform new evidence-driven and technology-based approaches. While the Cell works on a range of text-mining tools to support the analytical work of desk officers, it has also continued its work at the intersection of energy and geopolitics in its Oil Working Group. The work and projects of the Innovation Cell are funded exclusively through the MYA.

Expanding Inclusivity in Peace Processes Through Artificial Intelligence (AI)

On 8-9 June, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen (OSESGY), with the support of the Innovation Cell and in partnership with a number of national and international non-governmental organizations, ran a first-ever AI-assisted, large-scale virtual consultation with Yemeni citizens on the opportunities and challenges of the ongoing peace process. This technology is the most recent contribution to DPPA's efforts to expand inclusivity in peace processes. Allowing for real-time online discussion in combination with polling, it provides the possibility for senior mediators to dialogue with and poll peace constituencies at scale, with live analysis of their views at relatively low cost. During the interactive online discussion in Yemeni Arabic dialect, over 500 Yemeni participants, a third of them women, expressed their views on a nationwide ceasefire, the future of the political process, and the need for measures to alleviate humanitarian suffering.



Yemen: Special Envoy Martin Griffiths meeting with Yemeni President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh. Photo: Office of the Special Envoy for Yemen

Scaling Social Media Analytics and Big Data Mining

The Innovation Cell is supporting colleagues in specific country contexts to identify patterns of hate speech and social mobilization, including social media campaigns targeting the UN and the SDG Agenda. Against the background of COVID-19, the Cell is also enhancing the Department's "social listening" capabilities through the development of an all-purpose social media mining tool to enable desk officers to conduct quick and efficient analyses of online content. Separately, the Cell contributed to the development of the Secretary-General's Data Strategy (<https://www.un.org/en/content/datastrategy/>), which serves as a comprehensive playbook for data-driven change in the UN system, based on global best practice.

Improving Data Storytelling and Data Visualization

For the twentieth anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda, the Cell is working with DPPA's Gender, Peace and Security Unit to conduct a major data-driven study of women's participation in peacemaking. Concurrently, as part of DPPA's work on public outreach and strategic communications, the Cell is developing projects on data visualization and storytelling, while also providing data visualization support to field missions and desks at UN Headquarters to enhance briefing materials.

Strengthening Early Warning Through Remote Sensing

As part of an early-warning effort to anticipate future water-related unrest and conflict, the Innovation Cell is working to create a water diminishment and displacement mapping system to identify regions in the Tigris-Euphrates basin most susceptible to water scarcity. Starting with Iraq as a pilot and working in collaboration with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), this will be an early-warning system that combines elements of earth observation (satellite imagery analysis) and climate change security perspectives. This initial Iraq-focused pilot project will help illustrate district-by-district levels of water-conflict risk while providing recommendations for policymakers on options for early action.

Exploring Strategic Foresight Methodologies

The Innovation Cell has hosted a series of digital innovation labs on foresight methodologies to facilitate futures thinking in the post-COVID and UN75 context. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the Cell has been working on integrating inter-disciplinary approaches and cross-dimensional perspectives for strategic decision-making. Further activities in the field of strategic foresight are envisioned throughout this year.

GOAL 2 - STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS FOR PREVENTION AND RESILIENCE

Partnership with regional and sub-regional organizations

DPPA continued to coordinate and scale up UN support to the AU Initiative on Silencing the Guns in Africa in line with resolution 2457 (2019). One of the activities it launched is an online initiative to provide young people with skills in unarmed civilian protection. In early 2020, 40 youth leaders from ministries, armed forces and civil society from Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia and Sudan participated in a two-month online course run by the group Nonviolent Peaceforce on field-based methods for building peace, protecting civilians in violent conflict without the use of guns, and reducing gender-based violence. Despite COVID-19-related lockdowns, the course helped empower youth leaders with unarmed approaches to protection of civilians, which they can now use to support their own communities. Building on the high level of satisfaction of participants, the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has replicated the training for 46 Darfuri peacebuilders.

Thanks to MYA funding, a consultant was deployed to support the League of Arab States (LAS) Secretariat in updating its electoral database software and to conduct training for LAS staff. The initiative included necessary IT solutions and a complete update of a previous database. The LAS electoral database also supports the regional organization in maintaining accurate records of women who have served in various capacities and to easily identify and recruit them for various electoral tasks.

Partnerships with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams

Peacebuilding and prevention remain a priority, even during this crisis. COVID-19 is hitting fragile and conflict-affected countries especially hard, and the pandemic has the potential to increase the risk of violence as it exacerbates existing grievances and inequalities and erodes trust in governments and institutions. With MYA funding, DPPA has strengthened its support structures and partnerships as Resident Coordinators (RCs) and UN Country Teams (UNCTs) often require additional capacities for preventive diplomacy. More concretely, through DPPA's regional desks and the Peace and Development Advisers deployed by the UNDP-DPPA Joint Programme on Building National Capacities for Conflict Prevention, the Department has provided advice and guidance to RCs and UNCTs on conflict-sensitive programmatic responses to the pandemic. The Innovation Cell has been providing support in social media analysis and political economy analysis to strengthen approaches across the peace and development nexus.

DPPA is also intensifying its mediation support to RCs such as in Ecuador where a Conflict Prevention Strategy, drafted with support from DPPA, was approved by the UNCT. The Country Team also welcomed the results of the DPPA-supported Interagency Task Force on Political Analysis on short-term scenarios and recommendations for preventive action. The recommendations included i) strengthening channels of communication with the various stakeholders; ii) incorporating a conflict prevention lens into the UNCT's programmatic work; and iii) developing a communication strategy for conflict prevention. As next steps, DPPA and an expert from the Standby Team will continue to support the Interagency Task Force to conduct medium-term scenario building (through the February 2021 general elections) and to design and implement a capacity-building programme on conflict prevention for the UNCT.

Women, Peace and Security

The impact of COVID-19 continues to amplify existing gender inequalities across the world. Women and girls in conflict-affected settings are especially vulnerable to the political, socio-economic and security ramifications of the pandemic. DPPA, through its high-level engagements has called for women's full, equal and meaningful participation as fundamental to both an effective pandemic response and peacemaking efforts. This includes advocating for comprehensive strategies for addressing the COVID-19-related spike in gender-based violence. Last month, DPPA also joined other partner entities of UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict to issue a joint statement calling on all conflict parties to commit to ceasing acts of sexual violence as part of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire.

COVID-19 has significantly impacted the Department's work to advance the WPS agenda and this includes the Special Political Missions (SPMs). The diversion of women and girls away from education, economic and political opportunities, coupled together with a lack of inclusive pandemic response mechanisms, risks undermining the gains made on women's rights and inclusive peace in some settings. At the same time, many engagements with women and civil society are now taking place online. For some SPMs, the ability to convene virtual meetings without having to make travel and visa arrangements has provided an opportunity to consult more frequently with women's groups, share timely information and concerns, and engage a broader range of participants.

DPPA has continued to explore innovative mechanisms to strengthen women's participation in peace processes and ensure effective implementation of the WPS agenda. Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and their teams have been using digital tools to engage women's civil society groups and ensure that their perspectives inform decision-making. For example, building on the work of

its Senior Gender Adviser, OSESGY held the first online high-level strategy session on inclusive mediation approaches in the context of Yemen on 7 April.

The session generated an action plan to elevate commitments to further promote women's participation and the integration of gender perspectives throughout the multi-track process. While the UN currently cannot host in-person meetings between Yemeni stakeholders due to COVID-19-related restrictions, OSESGY is conducting virtual meetings which offer possibilities for broadening participation and improving inclusion. In mid-June, the Office convened a virtual meeting focused on a gender-inclusive ceasefire and community safety. More than 20 Yemeni women participated in the virtual consultation. Nearly three-quarters of the participants came from inside Yemen, including over 40 per cent from the south, and young women comprised 23 per cent.



Yemen: Father and daughter, living with dozens of other IDPs in Sana'a, Yemen. Photo: OCHA/Charlotte Cans

DPPA's Gender, Peace and Security (GPS) Unit was part of the inter-agency planning team for the post-UNAMID United Nations presence in Sudan, which convened virtually for several months. Together with UN Women and other UN partners, GPS ensured that the mission planning process prioritized gender and women, peace and

security concerns and that the follow-on UN presence has adequate gender staffing. The Department will continue to support the planning of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) throughout 2020.

Following the establishment of the Women Advisory Group (WAG) for Iraq in October 2018, UNAMI and the international community have increased engagement with the Government of Iraq to promote women's political participation and advocate around the needs of women IDPs. During the reporting period, UNAMI developed a training manual to address leadership skills, advocacy, participation in public life, and other topics. UNAMI's implementing partner in this project, the Free Iraq Foundation, held a two-day virtual training-of-trainers on 23-24 June in preparation for the planned training of 45 women from five governorates. A key result of the project is a deepening understanding of the challenges and needs facing women entering politics and women already politically active.



Baghdad, Iraq: The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, visited Ayatollah Hussein al-Sadr's schools for deaf and blind children. Photo: UNAMI PIO/Sarmad Al-Safy

Local Peace Initiatives

In Colombia, attacks against former FARC-EP combatants have persisted, requiring strengthened prevention and investigation of incidents, as well as more fluid information-sharing on the provisions in the Peace Agreement that guarantee the security of former combatants. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, with MYA funds, established a dedicated liaison capacity, based in areas with pressing security challenges, to support the Special Investigations Unit of the Attorney General's Office with contextual security analysis. This expertise also helps to identify the main risks faced by former FARC-EP combatants and proposes gender-differentiated prevention and protection strategies. These efforts contributed to enhance trust between former combatants and state institutions in charge of prevention, protection and investigation of violence against former combatants by making existing tripartite arrangements involving the Special Investigations Unit, the Verification Mission and FARC representatives more effective and sustained.



Colombia: In Tumaco-Nariño, southwestern Colombia, nearly 80 former combatants are growing pineapple, aloe, plantain, and lemon as part of their reintegration process. Photo: UN Verification Mission in Colombia

Climate security

Under the umbrella of the DPPA-UNDP-UNEP Climate Security Mechanism (CSM), DPPA organized a series of capacity-building activities to strengthen the consideration of climate-related security risks in analysis, planning and programming across and beyond the UN system. A series of workshops with over 500 participants from UN entities, Member States and regional organizations provided opportunities to advance a common understanding of the linkages between climate change and security and discuss good practices regarding integrated risk analysis and management. Special political missions in West Africa and the Sahel, Central Africa, and the Horn of Africa, with support from the CSM, are working to analyze and address climate-related security risk more systematically and to expand partnerships with regional organizations and researchers.

The active engagement with partners enabled DPPA to contribute a climate security perspective to several reports of the Secretary-General during the reporting period, including on West Africa and the Sahel; the global state of peace and security; and the protection of civilians. MYA funds were also used to advance targeted research and strengthen the knowledge based on climate-related security risks. To this end, DPPA commissioned a multidimensional study of climate risks in the Middle East and North Africa that analyzed the interactions between climate change and social, political, economic and demographic factors, and provided recommendations to strengthen the ability of the UN to prevent conflict and sustain peace in the region.



Secretary-General António Guterres makes remarks to students at the Auckland University of Technology, about the need to defeat climate change and ensure that technology is used as a force for good. UN Photo/Mark Garten

GOAL 3 - ACHIEVE A LEARNING, INNOVATIVE WORKING CULTURE THAT TAKES FORWARD THE VISION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Strategic Planning, monitoring and evaluation

The mid-year reporting against the Results Framework shows that DPPA is on track in delivering against its Strategic Plan. The performance against most of the expected accomplishment indicators has been encouraging as 51 per cent of them are more than halfway to reaching their target; and only less than six per cent of the targets were revised as a result of the pandemic. In most of the other areas, expected accomplishments are on track against their targets. For instance, percentage of analyses incorporating inputs from other UN departments is at 57 per cent against a target of 64 per cent. In the reporting period, DPPA engaged with 470 civil society organizations, well ahead of the target of 299.

As a result of the pandemic, some of the targets needed adjusting. Border closures, travel restrictions, and social distancing measures led to cancellation of events and activities planned for the quarter. For instance, DPPA reported a total of 52 deployments (including on-site deployments and remote operational support) upon request for assistance in mediation, conflict prevention and electoral assistance against a target of 289 for the year. COVID-19 also led to delays in recruiting consultants and posed data collection challenges. As such, another indicator lagging is the number of lessons learned studies undertaken by DPPA. By mid-year, DPPA had initiated only two lessons learned studies against a target of 10.

DPPA will continue to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on its work and focus more specifically on areas that are lagging. For instance, the pandemic continues to affect electoral processes around the world. To continue to provide support, DPPA has developed a table of electoral events impacted by the pandemic. DPPA will update this data on a regular basis and will identify ways to conduct planned activities. Similarly, MSU has successfully recalibrated its work to provide remote support and capacity-building to circumvent the COVID-19 travel restrictions.

In response to the pandemic, the Department has continued to adjust and implement its strategic planning and monitoring tools. Recognizing the uncertainties and the need for greater flexibility during the pandemic, divisions shifted from annual to quarterly work plans. Along with identifying quarterly priorities, divisions also identified risks and mitigation measures in their quarterly work plans. As a result, these management tools remain a valuable source to facilitate discussions in teams, identify opportunities for cross-collaboration and for resource allocation.

A Task Force on Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) at Principal-level was established to coordinate the effort to revisit the UN Secretariat-wide Risk Register, taking into account the risks and response to COVID-19. DPPA focal points will continue to work with the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) to develop a Department-specific Risk Register. Deriving from the ERM framework, the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) is an accountability document that focuses on operational risks and controls at the departmental level. During the second quarter, DPPA engaged in validating these risks and initiating discussions on developing Departmental remediation plans. Both the Risk Register and the SIC will be used to monitor risks and be a part of overall MYA risk prevention efforts.

DPPA also finalized topics for its self-evaluations. DPPA has initiated its first assessment, and preparatory steps for the second self-evaluation are currently underway. In line with its commitment to transparency and learning, DPPA also finalized its annual report on evaluative exercises undertaken in 2019 (to be released soon). Starting last year, the Department began to systematically disseminate summaries of all its self-evaluations and lessons learned studies. This marked a major milestone in terms of advancing evaluation within the Department, and DPPA will maintain this good practice of disseminating and utilizing lessons learned.

During the reporting period, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) completed its evaluation of DPPA. Covering the period between January 2017 and October 2019, OIOS assessed the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of DPPA conflict prevention work in, and in support to, non-mission settings. Based on its findings, OIOS made recommendations related to strengthening management culture and communications, establishing a strategy for addressing hindering factors to conflict prevention, and strengthening its external partnerships. The Department accepted all recommendations and developed an action plan for their implementation.

The external Board of Auditors (BoA) also completed its audit of the Peace and Security Reforms and functioning of DPPA. Together with DPO, DPPA actively supported the work of the BoA and responded to requests for documents and clarifications. The Department also discussed the findings and recommendations with the Board and when requested, provided comments/clarifications to the BoA management letter.

Training, learning and knowledge management

During the reporting period, DPPA developed a condensed online version of its Drafting for Political Analysis Course. Owing to COVID-19, the course has been shortened and adapted to an online platform, allowing for more frequent updates, revisions and other improvements. The course aimed at promoting high quality and

consistency in DPPA written products, an important initiative post-reform. In the second quarter, DPPA trained 92 staff in the course.

Additionally, DPPA designed a six-week online dialogue on digital technologies and inclusion of women, with the support of the Innovation Cell, the Standby Team and the Graduate Institute in Geneva. Together with facilitators, selected staff from Headquarters and from the field will incrementally design proposals on the use of digital technologies to enhance women's meaningful participation in peace processes. The dialogue's facilitation team will be available to continue the conversation with the participants beyond the six weeks.

Equipping DPPA staff with project management skills is a prerequisite to the successful implementation of the MYA. As such, MYA funds contributed to improving the knowledge of 20 project managers with accredited PRINCE2 project management training during this quarter. During the online course, participants received an introduction to PRINCE2 themes, principles and processes, along with practical application of project management best practices.

DPPA also undertook several knowledge management initiatives, including the development of the first ever joint DPPA-DPO Policy on Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning. As part of ongoing efforts to enhance coherence across the peace and security pillar, the joint policy firmly establishes knowledge management as "everyone's responsibility" and highlights the accountability of the Under-Secretaries-General, Heads of Mission in the field, and all senior managers in ensuring compliance.

Building on traditional brownbag seminars, DPPA launched twelve virtual informal talks with contributions from the field on issues such as the role and perspective of religious peacemakers related to the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire, and the impact of COVID-19 on the WPS agenda.

DPPA plays an important role in the recruitment, induction, and management of UN experts who are hired as independent consultants and report to the Security Council sanctions committees on their investigations and findings. Currently, MYA funds are enabling the drafting of a comprehensive guide on the working methods of UN sanctions experts. With the guide, for UN sanctions experts should be able to conduct investigations utilizing common methodologies and standards, as well as feed into the development of a training curriculum.

Strategic communication

DPPA's communications team continued to work with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General's Spokesperson in the preparation of political messaging aimed at the media and the general public. Among the highlights during the reporting period, the Department took part with DPO and UN Women in a joint video campaign on the fundamental need to include women in peace efforts. Video messages from the three heads of Departments/entities were translated into all UN languages, Portuguese and Kiswahili and shared widely on social media.

In April, DPPA launched *Talking Prevention*, a new forum to engage with its partners and showcase the activities of the Department with concrete examples of its work made possible with MYA funding. Three sessions were held respectively on innovation, digital tools and mediation; electoral assistance post COVID-19 and the transition in Sudan; and the planning of UNITAMS. Building on the success of the first meetings, the *Talking Prevention* series will continue in the autumn.

As part of its coordination with the strategic communications and public information offices of SPMs, DPPA's communications team highlighted the work carried out by field missions to respond to the pandemic. Internal communications, including colleagues from the Department of Peace Operations as part of the shared regional structure, also remains a priority as staff continue to work from home.



Sudan: Sudanese Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok during the high-level partnership conference on 25 June to support Sudan's economic reforms and mitigate their social impact on its population. UN Photo